

## MORE NOTES ON THE WOOD ENGRAVERS OF NORTH AMERICAN INSECTS

Since the publication of our paper, "Notes on Some Wood Engravers of North American Insects,"<sup>1</sup> additional information has been secured, mainly through the kindness of Dr. L. O. Howard and Mr. Hobart Nichols, and is herewith presented.

Doctor Howard advises us that during his early days in Washington, the artist always drew his figures on the wood block. Riley had just come from Missouri and he too was quite accustomed to drawing on the block. Riley often told Doctor Howard that Macwitz did most of his Missouri figures, and that he was an excellent man and satisfied him perfectly. One of the first things that Riley did when he came to Washington was to look for a good wood engraver because he appreciated the value of good illustrations, and he found H. H. Nichols, of Washington, D. C. Mr. Nichols or his employees really controlled the engraving of insects for the Department of Agriculture until the advent of photo-engraving. Otto Heidemann came after Nichols died.

Henry Hobart Nichols was born in Danbury, Conn., May 10, 1838, and in the beginning of his career, he made all the drawings and engravings for the Medical and Surgical History of the Civil War. He started his apprenticeship with Frank Leslie, the publisher, and then went to the war, serving in a New York regiment. After the war he located in Washington, D. C., and did most of the engraving for the scientific publications of the Government. He was a close friend of Spencer F. Baird, Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution from 1850 to 1878 and Secretary from 1878 to 1887, and made a large number of ornithological engravings for him—winning a medal at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia for his work. In later years he was very successful in establishing a large business in Washington, where he employed six or eight of the leading wood engravers of the country. He contracted for the illustration of all kinds of government reports and was successful in this business until his death in No-

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vember, 1887, which was coincidental with the arrival of photo-engraving. His son, Mr. Hobart Nichols, to whom we are indebted for all the facts about his father, writes, "My earliest recollection of my father was in our home on L street in Washington. One room of the house was his work-shop. He was essentially an artist both in temperament and appearance. A handsome man—of good physique, dark eyes—and a heavy suit of dark hair which he wore long. He was industrious, often working late into the night while my mother read aloud to him. He was fond of music and painting and often amused himself with the latter. My mother was a great help to him, making many of the drawings on wood which he engraved."

Miss Marion Cushman, of the Rutgers University Library, called our attention to the insect wood engraving of J. W. Orr in "The Rhyme and Reason of Country Life," edited by Susan Fenimore Cooper and published by G. P. Putnam and Co., in 1854. Chapter XIV of this book, which consists of selections from various poets on the butterfly, the cicada, the grasshopper, the dragonfly, etc., is headed by a decorative engraving of roses, spider-web and butterfly, which is rather indifferently done.

John William Orr was born in Ireland in 1815 and came to this country when a child. He studied engraving in New York and later established the most important engraving business in that part of the country. Some of his work appeared in the publications of the American Tract Society, "Kniekerbocker's History of New York" (1852), Abbott's "Life of Napoleon Bonaparte" (1855), and Strong's "Illustrated American News" (1851-52), and Harper's "Illustrated Shakespeare." He died in New York in 1887.—*Harry B. Weiss and Grace M. Ziegler.*